



Faith, Medicine and A-Level Success: Newbridge Student Hana Cho Embodies Gen Z's Spiritual Shift

As students across the UK receive their A-Level results today, one Newbridge student is celebrating more than just top grades. 18-year-old Hana Cho, from Cardiff Sixth Form College, who today received four A*s in Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Maths, represents a new wave of high-achieving, faith-driven Gen Z students reshaping both academia and spirituality.

Hana, who has secured a place to study Medicine at University College London (UCL), is also part of a wider cultural trend highlighted in a new Bible Society report revealing that church attendance among Gen Z has quadrupled. Far from abandoning religion, today's youth are increasingly turning to faith for belonging, mental wellbeing and personal purpose.

For Hana, faith has always been central. She attends Tabernacle Baptist Church, Newbridge weekly, where she teaches Sunday School, including leading children's Bible sessions, and supports the elderly congregation. Her father is the minister and the family, who are Korean, are the only Korean members of the largely Welsh church — a space where Hana says she has always felt included and inspired.

"My faith is a huge part of who I am," says Hana, who is currently in Korea on a gap year where she is attending Yonsei University to strengthen her language skills and cultural connection. "I think a lot of people in my generation are looking for something real — somewhere they can belong and contribute. Church gives me that."

Her Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) explored the ethics of mandatory vaccinations, sparked by her observations during the COVID-19 pandemic. "It made me think about the balance between public health and individual choice," she said. "That was a turning point in wanting to study medicine — to be part of big, ethical conversations that affect lives."

The Bible Society report notes that young Christians cite community, hope, and a personal connection with God as reasons for engaging with faith — with data showing higher life satisfaction and lower stress levels among regular churchgoers. Hana's experience supports those findings. Alongside her studies, Hana was President of the Medical Reading Club, participated in school dance showcases, reached Grade 7 in piano, and completed work placements in both education and healthcare settings. She also took part in a six-month debating programme in Cardiff and regularly engaged in inter-house competitions at school.

She credits her church upbringing — from volunteering to intergenerational connections — with shaping her character and career path. "Talking with elderly members of our church every week helped spark my interest in geriatric neurology. They've given me wisdom and perspective that you can't get from a textbook."

With her future in medicine secured, Hana looks forward to bringing her values of service, compassion, and curiosity into her next chapter — one that reflects a growing movement among her generation.

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